

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 10455 151503Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----098279 151507Z /40

O 151435Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4911
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 10455

EXDIS

MILITARY ADDEES TREAT AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, MILI, LE, IS, US
SUBJECT: WHERE IS THE LEBANESE BATTALION?

REF: (A) JERUSALEM 2247 (B) USDAO IIR 6849 0697 78
(C) JERUSALEM 2264

1. ARMA IS REPORTING REF B IDF SOURCES STATE THAT MAJORITY
OF LEBANESE BATTALION HAS WITHDRAWN FROM KAWKABA, LEAVING
BEHIND ONLY ONE PLATOON SALADIN ARMORED CARS AND ONE MM-113.
MOVE REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE DURING NIGHT OF 12/13 AUGUST.
IDF IS NOT SURE IF MAJORITY OF 650 MAN BATTALION HAS WITH-
DRAWN TO ITS BASE AT ABLAH (NEAR RIYAQ) OR IF IT HAS DEPLOYED
IN FATAHLAND IN VICINITY OF KFAR MISHKI. IDF BELIEVES THAT THIS
MAY BE A LEBANESE PLAN TO LEAVE ONLY A SYMBOLIC FORCE AT
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KAWKABA, WITHDRAWING THE MAJORITY TO SAFETY. THEY FEEL
THAT SUCH A MOVE COULD NOT BE MADE WITHOUT SYRIAN APPROVAL.

2. IDF ALSO REPORTS THAT AN ELEMENT OF THE LEBANES ARAB
ARMY (LAA) DEPLOYED ON 12 AUGUST IN THE VICINITY OF THE
AKIA BRIDGE. THE SIZE OF THE ELEMENT IS NOT KNOWN THE LAA
COMMANDER STATES THAT THIS IS AS A RESULT OF AN AGREEMENT

REACHED WITH AN UNIDENTIFIED PALESTINIAN GROUP.

3. COMMENT: A. THIS INFORMATION DOES NOT AGREE WITH THAT PROVIDED BY REF A WHICH STATED THAT MAJORITY OF BATTALION (600 OF ORIGINAL 650) REMAINED IN LAWKABA AS OF AUGUST 13. PRESS REPORTS TEND TO CONFIRM THE BATTALION'S MOVEMENT TO THE REAR. AT THIS POINT WE ARE NOT SURE WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THE BATTALION IS.

B. THE DEPLOYMENT OF A LAA ELEMENT AT THE AKIA BRIDGE, IF TRUE, IS NOT GOOD NEWS. THESE ARE RENEGADE MUSLIMS WHO AT VARIOUS TIMES HAVE CAUSED TROUBLE FOR ALMOST ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

C. ADDED. WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED JERUSALEM 2264 WHICH TENDS TO CONFIRM BOTH THE MOVEMENT OF THE BATTALION AND THE PRESENCE OF THE LAA. LEWIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMED FORCES, MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV10455
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780333-0898
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780861/aaaabzfh.tel
Line Count: 77
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a608f762-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 JERUSALEM 2247, 78 JERUSALEM 2264
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1732652
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WHERE IS THE LEBANESE BATTALION?
TAGS: PBOR, MILI, LE, IS, US
To: STATE BEIRUT
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a608f762-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014